Lieut: Generall Cromwells

LETTER

TO

The House of Commons,

OF

All the Particulars of taking the City of

BRISTOLL;

And the manner of P: *Ruperts* marching to Oxford.

Together with two Orders;

The one, for a Day of Thanksgiving in all parts of the Kingdom within the power of the Parliament. And the other, for a Collection for a distressed and plundered party in the said City of Bristoll.

ORdered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, That this Letter and Orders be forthwith printed and published:

H: Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

London, Printed for *Edward Husband*, Printer to the Honorable House of Commons, *Sept.* 18. 1645.

The Gatewalk Library

SIR,

IT hath pleased the Generall to give me in charge to represent unto you a particular Accompt of the taking of *Bristoll*, the which I gladly undertake.

After the finishing of that Service at *Sherborn*, it was disputed at a Councell of War, whether we should march into the West, or to *Bristoll*? Amongst other Arguments, the leaving so considerable an Enemy at our backs to march into the heart of the Kingdom, the undoing of the Country about *Bristoll*, which was exceedingly harrassed by the Prince his being but a Fortnight thereabouts, the correspondence he might hold with Wales, the possibility of uniting the Enemies Forces where they pleased, and especially the drawing to an Head the dis-affected Club-men of Somerset, Wilts, and Dorset, when once our backs were towards them. These considerations, together with the taking so important a place, so Advantageous for the opening of Trade to London, did sway the ballance, and begat that conclusion. When we came within four miles of the City, we had a new debate, whether we should endeavour to Block it up, or make a Regular Siege; The latter being overruled, Colonel *Welden* with his Brigade, marched to Pile-hill, on the South side of the City, being within Musquet shot thereof, where in a few dayes they made a good Quarter, over-looking the City; upon our advance, the Enemy fired Bedminster, Clifton, and some other Villages, and would have fired the Countrey thereabouts, if our unexpected coming had not hindred. The Generall caused some Horse and Dragoons under Commissary Generall *Ireton*, to Advance over Avon, to keep in the Enemy on the North side of the Town, untill the Foot could come up; and after a day, the Generall, with Colonell *Montagues*, and Colonell *Rainsboroughs* Brigades, marched over at Keynsham to Stapleton, where he Quartered that Night; the next day, Colonell *Montague* having his Post assigned with his Brigade, was to secure all between

Froom and Avon: he came up to Lawfords-gate, within Musquet shot thereof: Colonell *Rainsbroughs* Post was near to Durdham Down, where the Dragooners and three Regiments of Horse made good a Post upon the Down between him and the River Avon on his right hand, and from Colonell *Rainsborow's* Quarters to Froom River on his left: A part of Colonell *Birch*, and Major Generall *Skippons* Regiment were to maintain that Post; these Posts being thus setled, our horse were forced to be upon exceeding great duty to stand by the foot, least the foot being so weak in all their Posts, might receive an affront; and truly herein we were very happy, that we should receive so little losse by Sallies, considering the paucity of our men to make good the Posts, and the strength of the Enemy within, by Sallies, (which were three or four) I know not that we lost thirty men in all the time of our Siege; of Officers of quality, onely Colonell *Okey*, was taken by mistake going to the enemy, thinking them to be friends, and Captain *Guilliam* slain in a charge: We took Sir *Barnard Astley*, and killed Sir *Richard Crane*, one very considerable with the Prince: We had a Councell of War concerning the Storming of the Town about eight dayes before we took it, and in that there appeared great unwillingnesse to the work, through the unseasonablenesse of the weather, and other apparant difficulties. Some inducement to bring us thither, was the report of the good affection of the Townsmen to us, but that did not answer expectation: Upon a second consideration, it was over-ruled for a storme, which no sooner concluded, but difficulties were removed, and all things seemed to favour the designe; and indeed there hath been seldome the like cheerfulnesse in Officers and Souldiers to any work like to this, after it was once resolved on. The day and hour of our Storm, was appointed to be Wednesday morning the 10. about one of the clock; we chose to act it so early, because we hoped thereby to surprize the Enemy, with this resolution also (to avoid confusion, and falling foule upon one another) that when we had recovered the Line, and Forts upon it, we could not advance further untill day: The Generalls signall unto the Storm was the firing of Straw, and discharging four piece of Canon at Prior hill Fort, the signall was very well perceived by all, and truly the men went on with great resolution, and very presently recovered the Line, making way for the horse to enter, Colonell *Montague* and Colonell *Pickering* who stormed

at Lawfords gate, where was a double work well filled with men and canon, presently entred, and with great resolution beat the Enemy from their works, and possessed their canon, their expedition was such, that they forced the Enemy from their advantages, without any considerable losse to themselves, they laid down the Bridges for the horse to enter; Major *Desborough* commanding the horse, who very gallantly seconded the foot; then our foot advanced to the city walls, where they possessed the gate against the Castle-street, whereinto were put a hundred men, who made it good: Sir *Hardresse Waller* with his and the Generalls Regiment, with no lesse resolution, entred on the other side of Lawfords Gate towards Avon River, and put themselves into an immediate conjunction with the rest of the Brigade: During this, Colonell *Rainsborow* and Colonell *Hamond* attempted Prior-hill Fort, and the Line downwards towards Froom, Colonell *Birch*, and the Major Generals Regiment being to Storme towards Froome River; Colonell *Hamond* possessed the Line immediatly, and beating the Enemy from it, made way for our horse to enter: Colonell *Rainsborow*, who had the hardest taske of all at Prior hill Fort, attempted it, and fought neer three hours for it; and indeed there was great despair of carrying the place, it being exceeding high, a Ladder of thirty rounds scarce reaching the top thereof; but his resolution was such, that notwithstanding the inaccessableness and difficulty, he would not give in over: The Enemy had four piece of canon upon it, which they plyed with round and case shot upon our men, his Lieutenant Colonell *Bowen*, and others, were two hours at push of Pike, standing upon the Pallizadoes but could not enter; Col: *Hamond*, being entred the Line, and Capt. *Ireton* with a Forlorn of Col: *Riches* Regiment, interposing with his Horse between the Enemies Horse and Col: *Hamond*, received a shot with two Pistoll bullets, which brake his Arme, by means the entrance of Col. *Hamond* did Storm the Fort on that part which was inward: By which means, Col. *Rainsborough* and Col: *Hamonds* men entred the Fort, and immediatly put to the Sword, almost all in it; and as this was the place of most difficulty, so of most losse to us on that side, and of very great honour to the undertaker. The Horse did second them with great resolution; both these Colonels do acknowledge, that their interposition between the Enemies Horse and their Foot, was a great means of obtaining this strong Fort, without

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which, all the rest of the Line to Froom-River, would have done us little good; and indeed, neither Horse nor Foot would have stood in all that way, in any manner of security, had not the Fort been taken.

Major *Bethels* were the first horse entred the Line, who did behave himself very gallantly, and was shot in the thigh, had one or two shots more, and his horse killed under him.

Colonell *Birch* with his men, and the Major Generalls Regiment, entred with very good Resolution, where their Post was, possessing the Enemies Guns, and turning them upon them.

By this all the Line from Priors-hill Fort, to Avon, which was a full mile, with all the Forts, Ordnance, and Bulwarks, were possessed by us; but one, wherein there were about an hundred and twenty men of the Enemy, which the Generall Summoned, and all the men submitted.

The successe on Colonell *Weldens* side, did not answer with this, and although the Colonells and other the Officers and Souldiers both Horse & Foot, testified very much resolution as could be expected; Colonell *Welden*, Col. *Ingoldsby*, Col. *Herbert*, and the rest of the Colonells, and Officers, both of Horse and Foot, doing what could be well looked for from men of honour, yet what by reason of the height of the Works, which proved higher then report made them, and the shortnesse of the Ladders, they were repulsed with the losse of about 100. men, Col. *Fortescues* Lieutenant colonell was killed, Major *Cromwell* dangerously shot, and two of Col. *Ingoldsbies* brothers hurt, with some Officers.

Being possessed of thus much as hath been related, the Town was fired in three places by the Enemy, which we could not put out, and this begat a great trouble to the Generall, and us all, fearing to see so famous a City burnt to ashes before our faces, whiles we were viewing so sad a spectacle, and consulting which way to make further advantage of our Successe; the Prince sent a Trumpet to the Generall, to desire a Treaty for the surrender of the Towne, to which the Generall agreed, and deputed Colonell *Montague*, Col. *Ramsborow*, and Col. *Pickering* for that Service, Authorizing them with Instructions to treat, and conclude the Articles which are these inclosed: For performance whereof, Hostages were mutually given on *Thursday* about two of the clock in the afternoone. The Prince marched out having

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a convoy of two Regiments of Horſe from us, and making Election of *Oxford* for the place he would goe to, which he had liberty to doe by his Articles.

The Canon which we have taken are about one hundred and forty mounted, about 100. barrels of Powder, already come to our hands, with a good quantity of Shot, Ammunition, and Arms, we have found already between two and three thouſand Muſquets. The Royall Fort had in it victuals for one hundred and fifty men, for three hundred and twenty dayes, the Caſtle victualled for neere halfe ſo long: The Prince had foot of the Garriſon as the Major of the City informed me, two thouſand five hundred, and about one thouſand horſe, beſide the Trayned bands of the Towne, and Auxiliaries one thouſand, ſome ſay fifteen hundred: I heare but one man hath died of the Plague in all our Army, although we have quartered amongſt and in the midſt of infected perſons and places, we had not killed of ours in this ſtorme, nor all this ſiege two hundred men.

Thus I have given you a true, but not a full account of this great buſineſſe wherein he that runs may read that all this is none other then the worke of God, he muſt be a very Atheiſt that doth not acknowledge it.

It may be thought that ſome praiſes are due to theſe gallant men, of whoſe valour ſo much mention is made, their humble ſuite to you and all that have an intereſt in this bleſſing is, that in remembrance of Gods prayſes they may be forgotten: Its their joy that they are inſtruments to Gods glory, and their Countries good, its their honour that God vouchſafes to uſe them: Sir, they that have beene imployed in this Service know, that faith and Prayer obtained this City for you; I doe not ſay ours onely, but of the people of God with you, and all *England* over, who have wraſtled with God for a bleſſing in this very thing. Our deſires are, that God may be glorified by the ſame Spirit of faith, by which we aske all our ſufficiency, and having received it, it is meet that he have all the praiſe.

Your humble Servant,

From *Briſtoll*, 14. Sept. 1645.

Oliver Cromwell.

17. *September*, 1645.

ORdered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, That on the next Lords-Day thanks be given unto God for the great Successe he hath given unto the Parliaments Forces under Sir *Tho. Fairfax* their Generall, in taking in the *City* of Bristoll, with the Castle and Forts, in all the Churches and Chappels within the Lines of Communication, and Bills of Mortality; and that the next Lords-Day come Fortnight, being the fift day of October, in all the parts of the Kingdom, within the power of the Parliament; And that the Lord Major of the *City* of London, do give timely notice hereof, to all the Ministers within the Lines of Communication, and Bills of Mortality; And that the Knights and Burgesses of the severall Counties, Cities, and Burroughs, do give notice hereof, and send Copies of this Order to the severall Counties, Cities and Burroughs: It is further Ordered, That the Relation sent up from Lieutenant Generall *Cromwell*, by the command of the Generall, of Septemb. 14. be Printed, and Read upon the dayes on which publique thanks are to be given unto God, for his great blessing in this Successe given at Bristoll,

H. Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

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17. *September*, 1645.

ORdered by the Commons assembled in Parliament, That on the next Lords day on which publique thanks is appointed to be given to Almighty God, for the great Successe at Bristoll, a collection be made in all the Churches and Chappels within the Lines of Communication, and weekly Bills of Mortality: And the Moneys collected, paid into the Treasurers for maimed Souldiers, at Tallow-chandlers Hall, by the severall collectors and receivers of the said Moneys, within two dayes after the said collection, and by the said Treasurers, distributed for the Relief of many distressed and Plundered people of Bristoll and the places adjacent.

H. Elsynge, Cler. Parl. D. Com.

FINIS.

THE CONCLUSION OF

Lieuten: Generall *Cromwells* Letter, to the Houſe of Commons, concerning the taking of *BRISTOLL:*

Which was contained in the Originall (ſigned by himſelf) but omitted in the Printed Copy, which is Authorized by the Houſe of Commons, (though there was a whole Page left blanke in that ſheete):

Whereby the World may know, how both Truth it ſelfe, and that worthy Gentleman are wronged (as well as other men,) either by the Printer or ſome others.

Reſbiterians, Independents, all had here the ſame Spirit of Faith and prayer, the ſame preſence and anſwer, they agree here, know no names of difference,

rit of Faith and prayer, the ſame preſence and anſwer, they agree here, know no names of difference, pitty it is, it ſhould be otherwiſe any where: All that beleeve have the reall Vnity which is moſt glorious, becauſe inward and ſpirituall in the body and to the head. As for being united in formes (commonly called uniformity) every Chriſtian will for peace ſake, ſtudy and doe as far as Conſcience will permit; And from brethren in things of the mind, we looke for no cumpulſion, but that of Light and reaſon.

In other things God hath put the ſword into the Parliaments hands, for the terrour of Evill dooers, and the praiſe of them that doe well; if any plead exemption from it, he knowes not the Goſpel. If any would wring it out of your hands, or ſteale it from you, under what pretence ſo ever, I hope they ſhall doe it without effect. That God will maintaine it in your hands and direct you in the uſe thereof, is the prayer of

Your humble ſervant,

From *Briſtoll*, this 14th. of
Septemb. 1645.

Oliver Cromwell.

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